

# INFORMATION FOR SHELTER STAFF

## How to Help Homeless Children Succeed in School

### School Enrollment Phase

- Know who your district homeless liaisons are and how to contact them.
- Work with parents in completing a *Release of Information* form for use between the school district and your shelter staff; fax the form to the school district.
- Assist parents in making an appointment with the school district's homeless liaison.
- Help parents understand their children's educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. These rights include:
  - ✓ Immediate enrollment, even without school records
  - ✓ Transportation to the school of origin\*  
(\*School attended when permanently house or school last enrolled.
  - ✓ Free school supplies
  - ✓ Course fee waivers
  - ✓ Free school meals.
- Post the educational rights of children experiencing homelessness in your shelter. (The National Center for Homeless Education offers free posters on the educational rights of children experiencing homelessness. To obtain up to 25 free posters contact NCHE at 1-800-308-2145 or online at [www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche).)
- Remind parents to inform the school if their child has any special needs.

For additional information, please contact Mary Maronek, Coordinator, Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program, [mary.maronek@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:mary.maronek@dpi.wi.gov) or (608) 261-6322, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.



*Appreciation is extended to Opening Doors,  
Illinois State Board of Education Statewide Awareness Project*



### Continued Support at the Shelter

- Parents and children will be nervous; reassure them.
- Take steps to assist parents and children to establish a schedule for getting up, grooming, getting to the bus stop, doing homework, etc.
- Have reading and activity books available for children to use. Give each child a book of their own.
- Help parents and children have a secure place for books and supplies.
- Provide a quiet space for volunteer tutoring, reading, and homework.
- Help parents assemble a sturdy folder for each child's school records.
- Encourage parents to call the school and their children's teachers with questions.
- Encourage parents to attend school events and to read to their children at every opportunity.